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Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/278, which was adopted following consideration by the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session of my report (A/68/220-S/2013/475) reviewing the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1998 report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318).

The report highlights major developments with regard to peace, security and development in Africa over the last 12 months. It also examines the implementation by the United Nations system of key priority areas identified in the review report, namely, on strengthening institutional cooperation with the African Union and its regional economic communities, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and conflict management, post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, sustainable economic growth and sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian affairs, rule of law and administration of justice, and support for security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

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Pursuant to the mandate outlined in General Assembly resolution 68/278 to develop policy proposals on persistent and emerging challenges and on the approach and support of the United Nations system, the report provides an in-depth analysis of the transformative agenda of the African Union to achieve a conflict-free Africa, as outlined in the Organization of African Unity/African Union Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration and Agenda 2063, the forthcoming ambitious 50-year plan of the African Union. This agenda reflects a political commitment to progressively and concretely address persistent and emerging challenges to peace and security in Africa, while simultaneously ensuring stable and enduring conditions for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Concerted action by African countries, regional institutions, the private sector, civil society, and sustained and strategic partnerships with the international community, including the United Nations, will be critical in realizing this agenda.

I. Introduction

1. In response to a request from the Security Council in 1998, the Secretary-General undertook a comprehensive analysis of the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The report proposed specific measures aimed at reducing conflict, building durable peace and promoting sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318).

2. Subsequent to that report, in 2009, in its resolution 63/304, the General Assembly requested me to submit a report reviewing the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1998 report.

3. A comprehensive review was undertaken, including broad-based consultations with Member States, the African Union and African regional economic communities, civil society organizations and the United Nations system through the interdepartmental task force on African affairs convened by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. The report on the review (A/65/152-S/2010/526) outlined progress made, persistent obstacles and new and emerging challenges facing Africa. It also set out concrete recommendations and proposals for renewed United Nations engagement with Africa.

4. Pursuant to the requests of the General Assembly, outlined in its successive resolutions on the subject, I continue to submit, on an annual basis, a report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, focusing, among other things, on pressing issues and innovative solutions in the continent. The present report focuses on the transformative agenda of the African Union to achieve a conflict-free Africa, as set forth by the African Union Heads of State and Government in their Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration. The agenda is intended to be an integral part of Agenda 2063, the forthcoming 50-year transformative development agenda of the African Union. In the interim, it is also aligned with the overall vision of both the African Union Commission and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Strategic Plans for the period 2014-2017.

II. The year in review

5. Since my last report, and as highlighted in my report on NEPAD (A/69/161), Africa has further expounded on its vision of an African renaissance and of a continent on the rise. African countries have made tangible progress in reforming their economies, boosting economic growth, improving governance and respect for the rule of law, and managing and resolving conflicts. In Madagascar, Guinea-Bissau and Egypt, transition processes were concluded with the successful conduct of elections, the restoration of constitutional order and the reinstatement of these countries into the activities of the African Union. Progress was also made to end the rebellion by the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to implement the regional cooperation initiative for the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

6. While these positive trends have created a favourable climate for investment and a new spirit of optimism about Africa's prospects, there have also been some reversals. In the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan, renewed hostilities and threats from growing acts of terrorism, violent

extremism and transnational organized crime have resulted in challenges to both peace and development. The United Nations continued to work closely with the African Union and its regional economic communities to support their regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution in addressing these problems.

7. The Security Council, after consultations with the transitional authorities in the Central African Republic, led by interim President Catherine Samba-Panza, the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), adopted resolution 2149 (2014), establishing the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The resolution further mandates the transfer of authority from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) to MINUSCA on 15 September 2014.

8. The United Nations, through MINUSCA, will support the transitional authorities to implement the transitional process, including through efforts to extend State authority and preserve territorial integrity. MINUSCA is also mandated to protect civilians, promote and protect human rights, provide humanitarian assistance, support national and international justice, the rule of law and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation. Coordination of efforts with the African Union, ECCAS, the European Union mission to the Central African Republic, the French forces and the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic, will be critical for the success of the mission.

9. Since the outbreak of violence in South Sudan in December 2013, the political, security, humanitarian and human rights situation has deteriorated, in spite of multiple signed agreements on the resolution of the crisis. The United Nations, the African Union and Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have been involved in the mediation process and continue to facilitate political dialogue aimed at finding lasting solutions to the crisis. In March 2014, IGAD decided to deploy a regional force to South Sudan. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2155 (2014), the United Nations, through the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), will continue to assist the IGAD ceasefire monitoring operations in South Sudan.

10. South Sudan and the Sudan made progress in implementing the road map that was adopted by the African Union Peace and Security Council in April 2012 and endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 2046 (2012), outlining the steps to defuse the tension between the two countries. However, the African Union team of experts, mandated to provide a non-binding opinion on the status of the five disputed border areas and the work of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, made little progress. My Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan will continue to work closely with the two countries, the African Union High-level Implementation Panel and the United Nations missions in the region towards the full implementation of the cooperation agreements.

11. The recurring cycle of inter-communal violence in Darfur has resulted in deaths and further displacement of the civilian population. The African Union/United Nations Joint Special Representative and Chief Mediator for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) continues to work closely on the peace process with facilitators of the Darfur-based Internal Dialogue and Consultations, notably the African Union, UNAMID, the State of

Qatar and the Implementation Follow-up Commission of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

12. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the rebellion by M23 officially ended with the signing of the Nairobi Declaration with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2013. The United Nations continues to work closely with the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to implement the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

13. Pursuant to the framework agreement and the conclusions of the Kampala dialogue, the Congolese Government passed the amnesty law covering acts of war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is an important step that will advance the peace consolidation process. In addition, the Governments of the region, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the team of Special Envoys in the region launched the Great Lakes Women's Platform, the forum on private investment to support the implementation of the framework agreement, and the forum of hope for youths of the countries of the region. These efforts strengthen implementation of the cooperation framework and solidify the nexus between development, peace and security.

14. In Libya, the political and security situation continues to deteriorate. The United Nations, through the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) remains engaged in providing support to the authorities, including for the holding of parliamentary elections on 25 June and to facilitate a Libyan-led political dialogue aimed at forging an agreement by political actors and armed groups on the future of the transition. However, deep political polarization alongside increasingly violent clashes between the main armed groups continues to undermine the fledgling political transition process.

15. Developments in Somalia demonstrate the value of the strategic partnership between the Government, the African Union and the United Nations. Despite challenges, the country continues to make progress towards reconciliation and peace consolidation. The Federal Government of Somalia convened a "Vision 2016" Conference in September 2013, and has started legislative work to appoint the commissions that will lead the constitutional review, the delineation of boundaries and the preparation for elections in 2016. However, Al-Shabaab continues to pose significant threats to the peace, security and development of Somalia and the region. I have strongly condemned their activities, including the 8 July 2014 attacks on the presidential palace, and stated that continued international support is required to combat terrorism in the country and region.

16. In addition, the Federal Government of Somalia needs financial and capacity-building support to enable it to deliver security and social services, build capable public institutions and boost the economy. The international community had in 2013 pledged $2.4 billion as part of the New Deal Compact to promote peace and State-building efforts. However, despite commitments, financial support to Somalia has been especially low. Some donors have further announced a decrease in their contributions, and the trend is likely to continue into 2015. It is important that the international community remains fully committed to supporting the peace consolidation efforts of Somalia.

17. In West Africa, growing acts of terrorism and transnational organized crime in northern Mali and north-east Nigeria continue to exacerbate insecurity, gross violations of human rights and disregard for international humanitarian law. With the support of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the international community, including the United Nations, the Government of Mali continues to implement the ceasefire agreement of 23 May 2014, stabilize the country, strengthen democratic processes and institutions, and combat terrorism and transnational organized crime.

18. At the regional level, neighbouring countries have also enhanced cooperation to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime. Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger created the Group of Five Sahel Nouakchott framework to intensify their security cooperation and operationalize the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahel-Sahara region. In support of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched its strategy for the Sahel for the period 2013-2017, which seeks to foster cooperation with neighbouring countries in North and West Africa on criminal justice, in order to combat illicit trafficking, organized crime, terrorism and corruption.

19. Following the deteriorating security situation in Nigeria, arising from the frequent and lethal attacks by Boko Haram, the United Nations strengthened its support to the Government of Nigeria, providing an integrated support package that includes immediate support for affected families and communities, as well as for the abducted Chibok girls, upon their rescue, release or escape. The package includes psychosocial counselling and reintegration support for the girls and emergency needs and early recovery support, to help in tackling some of the long-term national structural challenges.

20. In May 2014, the Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee decided to include Boko Haram on its sanctions list. In my report on children and armed conflict (A/68/878-S/2014/339) of May 2014, I also included Boko Haram as a new party on the list of parties that recruit or use children, kill or maim children, commit rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, or engage in attacks on schools and/or hospitals in situations of armed conflict not on the agenda of the Security Council, or in other situations. Going forward, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), my Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict will work with relevant stakeholders to establish the monitoring and reporting mechanism on violations undertaken by Boko Haram. In general, as the country prepares for elections in 2015, concerted political action is required to deal with growing security concerns. My High-level Representative to Nigeria will continue to lead the efforts of the United Nations in supporting the country's own efforts to restore security, promote human rights and address the humanitarian situation in the north-east.

21. Other important developments relate to the successful conduct of elections in Algeria, Malawi, Mauritania, Somalia's Puntland and South Africa. An additional 8 African countries are scheduled to hold elections before the end of 2014 and 11 more in 2015. Given the proclivity of elections to act as triggers of conflict, and building on the recommendations in my previous report to the General Assembly on election-triggered conflict (A/68/220-S/2013/475), I encourage all actors, particularly at national levels, to create conducive conditions for inclusive, free,

credible and peaceful elections. The United Nations will continue to work closely with the African Union and the regional economic communities to provide support to countries undergoing elections, before, during and after the polls.

22. The African Peer Review Mechanism can provide useful lessons learned and best practices on how to successfully manage elections. On this note, I welcome the accession of Equatorial Guinea to the Mechanism. I also congratulate South Africa and Mozambique for their respective progress reports on the implementation of their national programmes of action. Meanwhile, the Mechanism still requires substantial financial and capacity-building support to advance its activities. The international community should continue to support this important voluntary mechanism.

23. Given the strong links between natural resources, conflict and fragility in Africa, concerted efforts were made by the African Union, in collaboration with the United Nations, to advance Africa's transformative agenda for sustainable natural resource management. The agenda aims to promote economic transformation through commodity-based industrialization and to address poverty, inequality and youth unemployment.

III. Enhanced focus on the nexus between peace, security and development

24. In my review report (A/65/152-S/2010/526), I underscored the importance of linking economic growth and socioeconomic development with peace, security, stability, governance, rule of law and human rights. Rapid socioeconomic transformation, the current priority of the African Union, can be achieved faster under a peaceful, secure and stable environment. Likewise, durable peace and security are enabled by inclusive and sustained socioeconomic development.

25. In demonstrating my commitment to operationalizing this nexus, I undertook two joint visits, with the President of the World Bank, to the Great Lakes and Sahel regions in Africa in May and November 2013, respectively. Our message was that peace and development must go hand-in-hand. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the President of the African Development Bank, my Special Envoy for the Sahel and the Commissioner for Development of the European Union joined us in our visit to the Sahel region. The visits catalysed the mobilization of resources for peace, stability and development initiatives in both regions.

26. In the Great Lakes region, the World Bank committed $1 billion to provide better health and education services, generate more cross-border trade and fund hydroelectricity projects in support of the framework agreement for peace, security and cooperation. In the Sahel region, a contribution of $8.25 billion was made towards boosting economic growth and eradicating poverty, through projects that would support peace and security efforts.

IV. Implementation of the recommendations in the review report

27. The present section provides an overview of the implementation by the United Nations system of key priority areas for Africa's peace and security agenda identified in my review report.

A. Institutional cooperation

28. Within the framework of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union and the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, the United Nations and the African Union continued to enhance their institutional cooperation on 10 thematic clusters, including peace and security and governance. In 2013, both organizations undertook the second triennial review of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union and presented its report to the fifteenth session of the Mechanism, which was held in Abuja in March 2014.

29. The outcome document of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa meeting called for greater engagements with the regional economic communities, especially in formulating a comprehensive long-term United Nations programme of support to the African Union as a successor to the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union upon its expiration in 2016. It also called for greater coherence and coordination of United Nations system support to Africa and underlined the role of the interdepartmental task force on African affairs in enabling the organization to deliver as one.

30. In addition, a joint review of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa was undertaken to better align it with both the African Union Commission and NEPAD Strategic Plans for 2014-2017 and the African Union Agenda 2063. A key decision was taken to hold the Mechanism meetings on the margins of the joint annual meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance, so as to enable high-level engagements of senior officials.

31. On peace and security, both organizations continued to enhance their cooperation on different components of the African Peace and Security Architecture, including on early warning, preventive diplomacy, mediation, electoral assistance, peacekeeping and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. Consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations on the role of regional arrangements, the United Nations Security Council and Peace and Security Council of the African Union continued to strengthen their partnership in conflict prevention, resolution, management and peacekeeping. In June 2014, they held their eighth joint consultative meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and, among other things, observed the tenth anniversary of the African Union Peace and Security Council, while agreeing to further elaborate ways of strengthening their relations.

B. Conflict prevention, peacekeeping and conflict management

32. On conflict prevention, the United Nations maintained a determined and cohesive international engagement with the African Union, SADC, donors and local stakeholders like the Independent National Electoral Commission by deploying its high-level good offices in Madagascar to prevent conflict and ensure the conduct of peaceful elections. As part of their conflict prevention strategies, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the African Union and ECOWAS organized the fifth Africa regional platform and third ministerial meeting on disaster risk

reduction in May 2014 in Nigeria. The meeting called for integrated approaches to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation as means to prevent conflict.

33. In peacekeeping, there was growing cooperation between the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Army. Their joint military operations resulted in the recovery of more towns from Al-Shabaab control. Support to the Somali security forces increased, including through a United Nations trust fund, assisted delivery of a non-lethal package to the Somali National Army forces fighting alongside AMISOM. This was authorized by the Security Council in resolution 2124 (2013), which also extended the mandate of AMISOM for an additional year and increased the troop level to 22,126.

34. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Forces armées de la Republique démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), including its intervention brigade, continue to intensify their joint operations to oust destabilizing armed groups such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and LRA.

35. Recent global considerations and decisions on United Nations peacekeeping were also pertinent for Africa. Drawing on the experiences with the MONUSCO intervention brigade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Security Council convened an open debate in June 2014 on new trends in United Nations peacekeeping that deliberated on the boundaries of traditional peacekeeping through peace enforcement. The General Assembly, in June 2014, adopted resolution 68/281 on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries, manifesting the recognition by Member States of the importance of peacekeeping in addressing conflicts. These are welcome developments for Africa, where more than two thirds of all United Nations military, police and civilian personnel operate. As the continent is increasingly contributing to United Nations peacekeeping and seeks to further strengthen its peacekeeping capacity, including through the operationalization of both its African Standby Force and its rapid deployment capability, these global debates and decisions are particularly relevant for Africa.

C. Post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery

36. United Nations Peacebuilding Fund support to 15 African countries during the review period amounted to about $50 million. As stated in its May 2014 review report,[1] roughly 60 per cent of its annual allocations were made in support of the six countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission: Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The remaining funds supported important peacebuilding initiatives in Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Niger.

37. In the Central African Republic, the Peacebuilding Fund facilitated rapid response to the crisis by providing financial assistance to enable the rehabilitation of police and gendarmerie facilities in Bangui, facilitating the urgent deployment of human rights monitors in support of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), and reinforcing the transitional

[1] The report is available at www.unpbf.org/wp-content/uploads/Final-Report-May-UN-PBF.pdf.

authorities by paying salaries of the police and gendarmerie for a limited period of four months in 2014.

38. In the light of significant advances in consolidating peace in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) drew down in March 2014 and transferred its residual activities to the Government and the United Nations country team. UNIPSIL successes underscore the importance of national ownership and leadership, inclusive political dialogue, coordination and sustained resources for efforts to bring about peace, stability and development. In July 2014, the Peacebuilding Fund approved additional funding for peace consolidation in post-transition Sierra Leone. This included $525,000 for consolidated human rights support activities in partnership with the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and $1,525,000 to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for developing national mechanisms and capacities for peace consolidation and conflict prevention in Sierra Leone.

39. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) also continued to support countries in fragile situations with an approach that emphasized the need for proper assessment of the political and institutional environment and the design of economic strategies that are gradual, flexible and tailored to the country's capacity constraints. IMF provides assistance both financially and through policy advice and technical assistance, including through the Rapid Credit Facility that provides immediate financing support. The Central African Republic, Madagascar and Mali received support through the Rapid Credit Facility. IMF also supported capacity-building in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Uganda in natural resource revenue management, tax administration, public financial management, banking and monetary issues and macroeconomic statistics.

D. Human rights and humanitarian affairs

40. In line with the "Rights up front" initiative, which I launched in December 2013, United Nations system entities continued to take concrete actions to integrate human rights into their strategies and operational activities. With the support of UNDP, in May 2014, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted the Guidelines on the Use and Conditions of Police Custody and Pre-trial Detention in Africa, which set the continental agenda for acceptable pretrial justice practice. The Commission also adopted a four-year strategic plan (2014-2017), which will be aligned with the forthcoming African Union Agenda 2063.

41. OHCHR continued to provide secretariat support to the International Commission of Inquiry for the Central African Republic and technical assistance to the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan. In line with the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement, OHCHR will engage the Malian authorities on modalities for establishing an international commission of inquiry to investigate the incidents in Kidal, if the authorities decide to go forward with this. On 27 June 2014, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution establishing an international commission of inquiry, for a period of one year, to investigate all alleged violations of human rights in Eritrea.

42. A recent UNMISS report, "Conflict in South Sudan: A Human Rights Report",[2] revealed that there are reasonable grounds to believe that all parties to the conflict have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. The interim report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, submitted to the African Union Assembly in June 2014, further highlighted allegations of sexual and gender-based violence. In response, UNMISS has intensified its work on human rights monitoring and reporting and the protection of civilians. Similarly, in response to developments on the ground, UNAMID increased efforts to protect civilians and promote human rights in Darfur. UNDP strengthened national capacities to investigate and prosecute international crimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including crimes related to sexual and other forms of gender-based violence.

43. On the humanitarian front, food security in South Sudan deteriorated at an alarming rate and resulted in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) expanding its humanitarian action to support 3.3 million conflict-affected people with emergency livelihood support. In Somalia, humanitarian needs remained acute as financial support has been especially low, with only 19 per cent of the humanitarian appeal funded. In addition, there are re-emerging signs of drought. Consequently in June 2014, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs issued an appeal for $60 million to address urgent food, nutrition and health-care needs for the next three months.

44. In the Sahel region, the number of food insecure people is expected to increase from 20 million to 24 million by the end of July 2014, owing to a combination of both acute and chronic factors such as climate change, conflict and population growth. An increase in the caseload of food insecure people is expected to take place in northern Cameroon, Mali, Senegal and Northern Nigeria for the first time. The regional strategic response plan for the Sahel of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs that was launched in February 2014 is responding to this situation through life-saving activities.

E. Rule of law and the administration of justice

45. During the review period, the United Nations continued to shape global debates on the rule of law. In February 2014, the Security Council held an open debate on the rule of law to deliberate on my report on measuring the effectiveness of the support provided by the United Nations system for the promotion of the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict situations (S/2013/341). Among other things, the report outlined that the United Nations, through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has provided wide-ranging assistance to Governments, from constitution-making to strengthening police, justice and corrections institutions, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali. In June 2014, the General Assembly held a high-level event on the contributions of human rights and the rule of law in the post-2015 development agenda.

[2] The report is available at http://unmiss.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=5805&language=en-us.

46. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations provided support for the restoration of State authority through projects aimed at strengthening the judiciary, the security sector and penitentiary institutions, and improving access to justice for victims of sexual violence in South Kivu, North Kivu and Ituri. The United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) supported the Ministry of Justice in developing a strategic plan to fight corruption in the justice sector and improve equal access to justice.

47. Under its regional programme for Arab States, 2011-2015, UNODC continued to support countries in North Africa, notably Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, to improve their criminal justice systems in order to strengthen the rule of law. Similar support is being provided to Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia under the auspices of the regional programme for eastern Africa, 2009-2015.

48. The United Nations Democracy Fund continued to support civil society engagement for good governance and the rule of law. Recent projects of the Fund have included collaborative efforts by judges and community workers to promote access to justice in Malawi, support local peace structures to prevent community-based conflicts in Sierra Leone, support for local governance in mining zones of Guinea and support for civil society participation in local governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

F. Economic growth and sustainable development

49. In the last 12 months, the African Union developed its Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and framed its priorities for the sustainable development goals. These processes were extensively supported by various United Nations system entities, in close collaboration with the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency and the regional economic communities. For instance, ECA, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and UNDP supported the efforts of the African Union Commission to influence acceleration of Millennium Development Goals implementation as the foundation of the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals. ECA, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and other partners also organized the African ministerial consultative meeting on the sustainable development goals, providing a platform for African countries to identify, articulate and reach consensus on regional development priorities. In line with General Assembly resolution 67/294, the United Nations will continue to give due attention to Africa's priorities, including the NEPAD priorities, in the last phase of our formulation of the post-2015 development agenda.

50. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized the first Economic and Social Council integration segment on sustainable urbanization, including a panel event on the theme "Sustainable urbanization in Africa", in May 2014, to raise awareness about and advocate for Africa's sustainable development priorities. On the Africa Industrialization Day in November 2013, the African Union, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization organized a joint event that deliberated on job creation and entrepreneurship development as a means to accelerate industrialization in Africa.

51. At the seventh joint annual meetings of the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance, held in Abuja in March 2014, African ministers discussed industrialization for inclusive and transformative development in Africa. The meeting underscored that Africa's growth has not been sufficiently inclusive and broad-based, because of its continued reliance on the exploitation of raw materials with limited value addition. This does not maximize returns to Africans from the wealth created from the continent's vast natural resources. Therefore, a new approach is required that will ensure Africa's industrialization and structural transformation are inclusive. The meeting underscored the need for coherent long-term development planning frameworks with inclusive development goals and adopted a ministerial statement underscoring a set of actions to advance industrialization for structural transformation that boost African economies, empower citizens and advance African integration.

G. Support for security sector reform and disarmament, demobiiization and reintegration

52. In April 2014, the Security Council adopted resolution 2151 reaffirming the importance of security sector reform in post-conflict situations. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO facilitated the development of a national security and justice strategy, provided capacity-building support to the Congolese National Police, including in community policing in Bunia, and supported the Government in the development of its national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

53. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) assisted the national authorities in the implementation of the national security sector reform strategy and is building the capacity of the secretariat of the National Security Council. The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) is helping the Government enhance oversight, accountability and management of its security sector, and strengthen the financial sustainability of reform efforts.

54. In Mali, MINUSMA is fostering a nationally owned security sector reform programme and coordinating the overall support of the international community in security sector reform. In Somalia, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) is supporting the Federal Government's efforts to establish a National Security Council secretariat. In Guinea-Bissau, the United Nations provided support to the permanent secretariat of the national security sector reform steering committee in drafting a concept note on the way forward in implementing up-to-date national security sector reform plans.

V. Persistent and emerging challenges and opportunities: a transformative agenda to achieve a conflict-free Africa

55. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/278, this section provides an overview of persistent and emerging challenges to the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. It also examines existing and emerging opportunities, notably the African Union's agenda for a conflict-free Africa, and the United Nations approach and support for this agenda.

A. Overview

56. The African Union Assembly, at its fifth ordinary session in Sirte, Libya, in July 2005, adopted a declaration on the review of the Millennium Development Goals (Assembly/AU/Decl.1(V)), in which it pledged to address conflict and political instability on the continent with the aim of achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2010. The international community, including the United Nations, rallied to support this five-year target.

57. While Africa did make significant progress in addressing and resolving its conflicts, the goal of a conflict-free Africa by 2010 was not realized, owing to persistent and new challenges, some of which I have addressed in preceding reports on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. These include the poor management of diversity, elections-triggered conflict, natural resource-based conflicts and youth unemployment.

58. Relentless in its determination to achieve this goal, the African Union Assembly, at its twenty-first ordinary session in May 2013, commemorating 50 years of the Organization of African Unity/African Union, adopted a declaration in which it again pledged to end all wars by 2020 and achieve a conflict-free Africa. The current conflict situations on the continent diminish optimism that Africa will indeed end all wars and be conflict-free in the next six-and-half years. Nevertheless, it is in the collective interest of the international community to work with African Governments, institutions and people, at all levels, in achieving this goal. The role of the United Nations will be extremely important in this regard.

B. Persistent and emerging challenges

59. Africa currently faces a new wave of complex challenges to peace, security, governance and sustainable development, including terrorism and violent extremism, transnational organized crime, illicit financial flows, poor natural resource management and climate change.

60. As my first biennial report on the review of the implementation of the commitments made towards Africa's development (A/69/163) extensively addresses climate change issues, and having previously addressed conflict and natural resources in my 2011 report on the implementation of recommendations (A/66/214-S/2011/476), I will limit this section to discussing terrorism and violent extremism, transnational organized crimes and illicit financial flows.

1. Terrorism and violent extremism

61. During the review period, Africa experienced increased terrorist activities, in particular in the Maghreb and Sahel regions. This resulted in deaths, human casualties, the destruction of property, abduction, sexual slavery, displacements, the loss of livelihoods, insecurity and the polarization of communities along political, ethnic and religious lines.

62. Terrorism and violent extremism in Africa are enabled by a number of factors. As the cases of Mali, Nigeria and Somalia demonstrate, widespread poverty, poor governance, weak public institutions, economic inequalities and high rates of unemployment create conditions for radicalization and violent extremism. Terrorist

groups exploit these situations to recruit new members and win the hearts and minds of communities. Tackling corruption, creating decent employment, providing basic social services to especially deprived communities and building strong and accountable public institutions are critical for countering radicalization, extremism and delegitimizing popular support for terrorist groups. Public-private partnerships and the engagement of civil society groups, including religious and community leaders, are also important in this process.

63. Countering terrorism also entails a focus on the source of terrorist financing, including kidnapping and hostage-taking. African Union Decision (Assembly/AU/Dec.256(XIII)) of July 2009 strongly condemns the payment of ransom to terrorist groups. The United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, at their eighth annual joint consultative meeting, further called on all Member States to prevent terrorists from benefitting directly or indirectly from ransom payments or from political concessions and to secure the safe release of hostages. They also considered sanctions as an important tool in countering terrorism and welcomed the inclusion of Boko Haram on the Al-Qaida Sanctions List.

2. Transnational organized crime

64. Transnational organized crime continues to pose serious challenges to peace, security and development in Africa. Besides traditional crimes like trafficking in drugs, persons and arms, there is a proliferation of new forms of transnational criminal activities in Africa. These include cybercrime, identity theft, trafficking of cultural property, environmental crimes and counterfeit medicine.

65. Most African countries currently lack the requisite infrastructure to address cybercrimes, including energy, Internet and communications technology. Investments in infrastructure, science and technology, and scientific cooperation within the public and private sectors, are therefore crucial and urgent. In my report on NEPAD (A/69/161) I outlined Africa's efforts in infrastructure development, and science, technology and innovation. I also emphasized the need to leverage private sector participation in infrastructure through innovative public-private partnerships, as underscored by the Dakar Agenda for Action of June 2014.

66. Furthermore, most militia or armed groups are either linked to transnational criminal groups or directly engaged in environmental crimes as a means of financing their operations. Militia groups in Central Africa are estimated to earn between $4 million and $12.2 million each year from elephant ivory. The Environmental Crime Crisis assessment report,[3] released during the first United Nations Environment Assembly, states that one terrorist group in East Africa is estimated to make between $38 million and $56 million per year from illegal trade in charcoal. In total, militia and terrorist groups in and around African nations with ongoing conflicts may earn between $111 million to $289 million annually from their involvement in, and taxing of, the illegal or unregulated charcoal trade.

67. Transnational organized crimes deprive African economies of billions of dollars, threaten livelihoods and undermine good governance. Hence, the role of Governments, parliaments, security and law enforcement agencies and regional

[3] The report is available at www.unep.org/newscentre/default.aspx?DocumentID=2791&ArticleID=10906&l=en.

institutions is critical for strengthening and enforcing legislation to combat these crimes.

3. Illicit financial flows

68. Illicit financial flows are a major development and governance challenge. The loss of national revenue and assets intended for delivering social services and long-term development impairs Governments, communities and businesses from making the investments necessary to create resilient pathways for economic growth and prosperity.

69. In recognition of the enormous cost of illicit financial flows to the development of the continent, the fourth joint African Union/ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in March 2011, adopted a resolution that established the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa. According to the progress report of the Panel, that was presented to the Conference of Ministers in Abuja, in March 2014, illicit flows from Africa amount to approximately $50 billion annually. This is approximately the official development assistance that Africa receives every year and, indeed, this estimate may well be short of reality. Noting that this is an African problem with a global solution, the report called for international cooperation and capacity development assistance to Africa in tackling illicit financial flows.

C. Making peace a reality: a renewed plan for a conflict-free Africa

70. In May 2013, the African Union Assembly reaffirmed its determination to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa that is driven and managed by its own citizens. In that regard, African leaders adopted the Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration, which outlined eight priority agendas for action towards realizing this continental vision: African identity and renaissance, the struggle against colonialism and the right to self-determination, integration, social and economic development, peace and security, democratic governance, Africa's destiny, and Africa's place in the world.

71. The agenda on peace and security categorically stated a shared determination to "end all wars in Africa by 2020" and "achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa". Following this, the African Union Peace and Security Council in April 2014 discussed the theme "Silencing guns: prerequisite for realizing a conflict-free Africa by 2020", with the aim of defining a framework of actions required to achieve the goal of a conflict-free Africa by 2020. The African Union Commission also organized a retreat in South Africa in April 2014 on the same theme, with the participation of senior officials of the United Nations, to establish a precise agenda and workplan for achieving the goal in line with Agenda 2063. The African Union Assembly, in its decision (Assembly/AU/Dec.536(XXIII)) of June 2014, further called for renewed efforts by the African Union member States, the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms towards achieving this objective.

72. The logic of the agenda is unequivocal and sequenced. In the short to medium term, the plan is to silence the guns and end all wars by 2020, as a required precursor for attaining a conflict-free Africa, which is a longer-term goal. Concrete actions to achieve this milestone within the next six-and-half-year period will thus

have to be undertaken in tandem with the longer-term plan being outlined in Agenda 2063. After 2020, efforts to consolidate the gains made during this period and tackle remaining challenges will naturally progress within the framework of Agenda 2063.

73. Substantively, the agenda envisions an inclusive society that is stable, safe and just for all Africans. The African person is at its core, regardless of sex, age, religion, nationality, ethnicity or race, ancestry, class or disability. Consequently, the agenda focuses on overcoming exclusion and promoting inclusive institutions and participatory processes for political, economic, sociocultural and environmental development. Its ideals and guiding principles are Pan-Africanism, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, justice and participation of all, including disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable groups and persons. Its approach encourages collaboration and partnerships among Governments at all levels, civil society, including the media, the private sector, the African diaspora and international partners in harnessing Africa's resources for the development and shared prosperity of its people.

74. In order to achieve this, and as outlined in the Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration, the African Union has set out to eradicate recurring and emerging threats, including terrorism, piracy, extremism, armed rebellion and transnational organized crimes like trafficking in narcotics and humans and cybercrimes. The African Union will continue to devise measures to ensure the effective implementation of agreements on landmines and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction and small arms and light weapons. Special attention will be given to the plight of internally displaced persons and refugees, including by eliminating the root causes of all conflicts through sustained investments in conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Alongside this, Africa's peacekeeping and enforcement capacities through the African Standby Force should be operationalized.

75. The African Union undertakes to end impunity and ensure accountability by strengthening national and continental justice institutions. The rule of law, democratic institutions and processes and service delivery capacities will equally be strengthened, alongside efforts to combat corruption and oppression. Underlying this is a commitment to develop human capital, protect rights, particularly those of women, children and the youth, and eradicate diseases. This is closely aligned with my "Rights up front" initiative, and I encou age the African Union to further benefit from the support of the United Nations in this area.

76. The aim of silencing the guns and ending all wars in Africa in a little over six years may appear ambitious, considering the current situations in the Central African Republic, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan. These conflicts need to be addressed and resolved as a matter of urgency, if the guns are to be silenced by 2020. This will require the sustained political will, commitment, leadership and responsibility of African Governments and peoples, as well as strategic and sustained partnerships with the international community.

77. As highlighted in preceding sections of the present report, the United Nations is already supporting regional, subregional and national efforts aimed at resolving these conflicts. However, more needs to be done to support the African Union in

achieving the current goal. The General Assembly may wish to consider defining a concrete five-year actionable plan in support of the goal of achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2020. Such a plan should seek to accelerate ongoing efforts to resolve the crises in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, among others, while also focusing on quick impact initiatives to be undertaken in close collaboration with the African Union and the regional economic communities.

D. Strengthening United Nations engagement and support for a conflict-free Africa

78. Since June 2011, the General Assembly has repeatedly called for intensified efforts and a coordinated approach among Governments, the African Union, the regional economic communities, the United Nations system and relevant partners in addressing challenges, with a view to achieving progress towards the goal of a conflict-free Africa. The General Assembly reiterated this call in its resolution 68/278.

79. While the support of the international community is important, it should be stressed that the primary responsibility for achieving a conflict-free Africa lies with African Member States and institutions at all levels. As such, the roles and contributions of the United Nations should mainly be in support of Africa's own efforts and agendas, as currently articulated in the Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration, the African Union Commission and the NEPAD strategic plan 2014-2017, the forthcoming Agenda 2063 and the broad array of African Union instruments on peace, security and development. In other words, United Nations support should be better aligned to the strategic priorities of the African Union.

80. Given varied mandates, resource constraints and competing priorities, United Nations support should be coherent and coordinated. The Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa and the interdepartmental task force on African affairs remain veritable platforms for strengthening coordination and coherence to better deliver as one United Nations. United Nations system entities should strengthen their collaboration within the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa and the interdepartmental task force on African affairs, in particular in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution, human rights, governance and the rule of law, and post-conflict reconstruction and development.

81. In this regard, the commitments made by Member States, in providing additional financial and human resources, to strengthen the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts to undertake its increasing responsibilities, including as the convener of the interdepartmental task force on African affairs, are welcome. This will reflect positively in the implementation of its mandate on peace, security and development.

82. The Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union has also been instrumental in improving coherence and alignment of United Nations system support with the strategic priorities of the African Union, including in conflict prevention, mediation and good offices, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. As this important programme will expire in 2016, the United Nations and the African Union took a joint decision during the fifteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa in Abuja, in March 2014, to establish a working group to start

formulating a successor programme that will also reflect the support of the United Nations to Agenda 2063.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

83. While African countries, the African Union and the regional economic communities continue to make progress in consolidating the African Peace and Security Architecture and accelerating efforts to implement the commitments contained in the Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration, in particular on silencing the guns, ending all wars by 2020 and achieving a conflict-free Africa, **the United Nations should intensify its support and cooperation with African countries, the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms towards the timely realization of this goal. In particular, the United Nations should consider putting in place a five-year plan to support the efforts of the African Union and the regional economic communities towards achieving a conflict-free Africa. This plan should include measures for accelerating ongoing efforts to address the situation in current epicentres of conflict, as these pose significant threats to the realization of a conflict-free Africa by the set timeline. As sustained and strategic partnerships will be crucial for achieving a conflict-free Africa, this plan should also include measures to systematically engage the private sector and civil society, especially women and youths, in these processes.**

84. The transformative agenda of the African Union underscores the interlinkages between peace, security, development, human rights and governance. **As the United Nations has a comparative advantage in operationalizing this nexus, the United Nations system should strengthen capacity development for the African Union and regional economic communities in this area through the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union and the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa.**

85. **As this nexus is further reflected in the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the international community and the United Nations should continue to give due attention to Africa's priorities in ongoing negotiations on the sustainable development goals and in the last phase of formulation of the post-2015 development agenda.**

86. The African Union, at the tenth anniversary of its Peace and Security Council, in May 2014, underscored the need for more resources to support and strengthen the Continental Early Warning System, the good offices role of Special Envoys and Representatives and post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts, including through the African Solidarity Initiative. The Council also emphasized the need for greater engagement with the African Union Panel of the Wise and similar structures at the level of the regional economic communities. **Within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the United Nations should continue to support African countries, the African Union and the regional economic communities in further strengthening capacities for early warning, conflict analysis, dialogue and mediation. The growing collaboration between United Nations and the African Union in the area of good offices and between United Nations and African Union Envoys should also be enhanced.**

87. Bearing in mind the importance of good governance and inclusive, effective and accountable public institutions for ensuring durable peace and sustainable development, **the international community, including the United Nations system, should, upon request, support African countries in their ongoing efforts to promote democratic governance, the rule of law and accountability in public institutions. Continued support for inclusive, free, credible and peaceful elections will be important in this regard.**

88. With Africa increasingly appearing to be the new epicentre of terrorism, a coherent security agenda is needed to tackle the growing problem of terrorism and violent extremism. Given that terrorism in Africa is largely a social phenomenon, it is also important to strengthen the engagement of civilians in counter-terrorism efforts. **As such, the United Nations should work closely with the African Union and the regional economic communities in supporting the development and implementation of regional counter-terrorism action plans that are people-centred. As these efforts should ideally include support to victims of terrorism, I also encourage African Governments, the African Union, the regional economic communities and African civil society organizations to utilize the United Nations Victims of Terrorism Support Portal.**[4]

89. To prevent radicalization and violent extremism, African countries need to take concrete measures to bolster State security forces' and law enforcement agencies' respect for human rights and the rule of law, promote civil-military relations and devise development programmes, particularly for youths. **In this regard, the United Nations should continue to support African countries, the African Union and the regional economic communities in implementing the African Union security sector reform policy framework, which was adopted by the African Union Heads of State and Government in 2013. The effective implementation of the framework will also be vital for strengthening institutional capacities and regional cooperation among security and law enforcement agencies in addressing transnational organized crime, including trafficking in arms, cyber and environmental crimes.**

90. Given the links between natural resource management and conflict, it is imperative to integrate natural resource management and environmental considerations into frameworks for conflict prevention, management and resolution. **I call on United Nations system entities to mainstream this perspective within their various mandates and expertise in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development.**

91. **Given the impact of illicit financial flows on Africa's governance and structural transformation agendas, African countries, the African Union and the regional economic communities, in cooperation with the international community, should further strengthen efforts to confront the scourge of illicit financial flows, including through combating corruption in both public and corporate sectors and preventing tax evasion.**

92. As Africa's transformation agenda is still evolving and includes a number of different components, it is important to closely monitor its development to ensure that the support of the United Nations system is constantly aligned with Africa's

[4] www.un.org/victimsofterrorism/en.

priorities. **In this regard, United Nations system entities should strengthen coherence and coordination within the interdepartmental task force on African affairs to monitor and report on these developments. In addition, as the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union expires in 2016, the United Nations and the African Union should accelerate the work of the joint working group established by the fifteenth Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa to propose to Member States a successor programme to the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union that will be closely aligned to the Agenda 2063 of the African Union.**